THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY) : (a) to (c) Government of Punjab has requested for setting up facilities for petrol/diesel outlets and LPG distributorships at the different focal points all over the State of Punjab. The locations found economically viable will be included in the Marketing Plan and allotted through the normal selection procedure of advertisement of the locations and selection through the Dealer Selection Board or merit on the basis of interview. It generally takes about 6-12 months for commissioning of the dealerships/distributorships from the date of interview.

Ancillary Plant to Produce Benzene

3042. DR. (SMT.) JOYASREE GOSWAMI MAHANTA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any Plan to install any ancillary plant to produce Benzene produced by cracking naphtha, being produced by BRPL (Bongaigaon Refinery and Petrochemical Ltd.) Guwahati Refinery and from NRL., which is going to produce naptha later on;

(b) if so, when it will take place; and

(c) if not the reasons therefor and criteria thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The project was not found viable as the quantity of Naphtha available from Assam refineries was not considered adequate to set up economic size plant capacity.

Interviews Organised by Oil Selection Board

†3043. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Oil Selection Board had organised interviews for Delhi and Chandigarh on 29th, 30th and 31st March, 1996;

(b) if so, the locations of retail outlet dealership or H.K.O. or LPG distributorship, for which the interviews had been organised; and

(c) the dates on which board has been constituted and when its term ended ?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY) : (a) to (c) Oil Selection Board, Delhi & Chandigarh had conducted interviews for the following locations on 29-3-96 to 31-3-1996 :—

S.No.	Location	Product	Date of Interview
1.	Delhi	LPG	29-3-1996
2.	Delhi	LPG	30-3-1996
3.	Vikaspuri/ Janakpuri	SKO/ LDO	29-3-1996

Oil Selection Board, UT Delhi and Chandigarh was constituted on 1-1-1993. The OSB (Delhi & Chandigarh) was again reconstituted on March 7, 1995, for two years. Tenure of the above Oil Selection Board was terminated on 5-3-1997.

Crude Oil Production

3044. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that crude oil production reduced from 33.86 million tonne in 1997-98 to 32.72 million tonne in 1998-99;

(b) whether the consumption of petroleum products has been increasing at about 6 per cent per annum; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to step up production to meet the growing demands for this products?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The growth in consumption of petroleum products including imports by private parties has been as follows :—

1996-97	6.0%
1997-98	6.5%
1998-99	7.4% (provisional)